

SOUTH CENTRAL

Individual Ideas From Evaluations

- Missing third leg of economic and community development formula – the role of non-profit arts; humanities, environment; social organizations. Arts can be a very successful economic anchor and driver (see Cleveland, Ohio and playhouse square Foundation).
- Focus ideas and investments. We can't be all things to all people. We need to prioritize and focus. Focus resources on designated urban areas or MSA's in Wisconsin. Create these centers of successful economic development. The success of those areas will help create expanded prosperity to the communities surrounding them.
- Whenever possible, keep the focus on the lowest level of government as possible.
- The visioning at the fall ED Summit and the planning and Build Wisconsin need to be merged into a single, understandable, and achieved strategy.
- The strengths of this day were the sharing and collective discussion; focus away from single opinion.
- Concern that retired community does not want to see development.
- Please be sure that the results of the private sector interviews are shared with the attendees today. I hope that the private sector interviews are clearly going to include innovative growth – oriented companies (not necessarily high-tech). The concerns of these companies should be understood by economic developers and educators. Also communities should understand the value of entrepreneurial companies and their unique contribution to job growth. I was a facilitator so was "neutral" but I got the impression that my group members were not really aware of the above issues. Thanks! P.S. I appreciated the facilitation instructions – they were very clear.
- Implement ideas!!!!!!!!!!!!
- Remember that there are twelve other campuses in the four year university system other than Madison who have a contribution to make to economic development. Use the SBDC's – it is a federal program.
- Move forward quickly with follow-up and an action plan with goals and benchmarks.
- Support main street programs – its grass-roots planning, education networking, etc.
- Return elected government to part-time paying job.
- But to reiterate our group's feelings – stop asking – do it! Many of us have been through this many times – please don't let it sit on the shelf.
- I did enjoy the variety of contributions and insights from all across the spectrum of business, education, government, private sector, etc.
- So much work is going into this effort. I just hope that something concrete comes out of this exercise.
- The Department of Commerce must increase the time frame from loan application or PDS approval to distribution of funds. Business moves swiftly, commerce should strive to keep pace. It shouldn't take 6-9 months for a deal with Commerce. Commerce has great programs already, now make user-friendly.
- Please do something with the suggestions/ideas!!!!

- While agricultural was listed in opening session as significant contributor to Wisconsin economy, it was overlooked significantly by most groups. Agriculture is changing fast and needs immediate attention.
- What kind of funding will actually be available for these ideas?
- Use high school programs to develop workforce.
- How to run the state government as private industry (mean and lean).
- If we all want the goods, services and quality of life we enjoy in Wisconsin, we need to accept its costs are increasing. So don't lower taxes. Step up and pay for it because that is what we really want. Quit kidding ourselves.
- State image is a vitally important whether retaining or attracting quality workers, retaining or attracting new businesses.
- Most issues identified today required dollars, where can the state re-focus money long term. I.e. develop rail; so that we don't have to continue increasing money into roads.
- Infrastructure, need strengthened, transportation, education, telecommunication. Act on the Plan.
- Need to emphasize high tech incubators.
- Campaign finance reform. Economist development – even capitalism itself – cannot exist in a regulatory vacuum. Enron proves this. Capitalism and economic development are mostly government services. Until government becomes transparent and consistent, taxpayers remain reluctant to fund and participate in economic development.
- Revise/enhance state brownfield redevelopment rules to better reflect business realities, e.g. awards for brownfield redevelopment created grant financing needed in real time, not on annual basis and expand current SAG grant financing program to private entities, not just municipalities. Provide financial incentives for Wisconsin college grads to work/live in Wisconsin possible deferred incentive, including investment earnings, for staying some extended period of time.
- Flexibility in state planning and policy for different parts of the state with different atmospheres, urban, rural, metro, agriculture, tourism.
- Industrial parks owned by counties to address large acreage requirements in rural areas.
- Value added agriculture products i.e. ethanol, soybean processing, but also something similar to something special from Wisconsin – seal and concept.
- A significant portion of our state budget goes toward education, yet Wisconsin continues to suffer from an increasing “brain-drain” spin down. We need to increase the utilization value of our in-state educational products (our best & brightest).
- Don't cut Technical College funding. Get more technical college training in rural areas. Must find way to increase employee productivity. Make it easier to obtain funding and tax credits and make it less cumbersome.